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Please take a moment to quiet yourself before the Lord. Ask your heavenly Father to forgive you of any sin that is upon your heart and fill you afresh with His Holy Spirit. Now please read 1 Corinthians 3:11-15.

**As Christians if we wish to build anything of eternal value (career, business, family, relationships), what must we build upon?**

The Greek word for *foundation* used in this verse is *themelios*, which means "the foundation of a building, beginnings, first principles, of institution or system of truth." Since God's Word is the only source of truth, the only way to start any project, relationship or occupation is lay our foundation upon the bedrock of Biblical truth. Jesus must be the beginning of everything you do. If He isn't building the house it won't endure.

**Please name the different materials from which we may choose to build:**

The gold, silver and precious jewels refer to the truth of God's Word, which will of course withstand the test of fire. Hay, straw and wood refers to worthless things that will not withstand the test of fire—as a matter of fact, these materials will feed the fire.

Not only must we build with the right material, but our *motive* must also be correct. As Colossians states, we must do every thing to the glory of God.

**What warning can we take from 1 Corinthians 3:13?**

Verse 13 states that, "...each one's work will become clear..." It seems then that we can be deceived about the kind of work that we are doing, but the fire will reveal whether our work is precious (eternal) or worthless

(temporal). The original word for *work* used in verse 13 is *ergon*, which means not only the work of our hands, but a product of any sort whether it is, "hand, mind, art or industry." Our works are important. Our thoughts are important. Our leisure activities are important. All of these things will be put to the test of fire. Deuteronomy 4:24 says that our God is a consuming fire—He will test our works.

**If any of our works survive the test of fire, what shall we receive?**

We shall receive a reward. Part of that reward will be to hear our Savior say, "Well done my good and faithful servant."

**According to these verses is it possible for born-again believers to build with hay, wood and straw?**

Yes it is. If we build without the right materials and/or motive Christians will suffer loss—not loss of salvation but of reward. In order to avoid loss, let us fill our hearts and minds with the truth of God's Word and ask our Holy Father to purify our motives so we can build for eternity.

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